

*The Benefit of good Instruction.*

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# SERMON

Preach'd before the Gentlemen

Educated at

**St. Paul's School.**

On the 26th of *January*, 170<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>.

At the Cathedral Church of *St. Paul*.


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By WILLIAM SMITH, M. A.  
Preacher at *St. Clement-Danes*.

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*Published at the Request of the STEWARDS.*

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T O  
My Worthy FRIENDS  
A N D

# School-Fellows,

Dr. Charles Pinfold,	}	James Brace, <i>Gent.</i>
Roger Williams, <i>Esq;</i>		Samuel Norris, <i>Gent.</i>
William Tilson, <i>Gent.</i>		Mr. Humphrey Thayer.
Thomas Huxley, <i>Gent.</i>		Mr. Robert Pawlet.

S T E W A R D S  
*Of St. PAUL's School Feast.*

Gentlemen,

This S E R M O N

*(Published at Your Desire)*

*Is most Humbly Dedicated, by*

Your very Affectionate  
and Obedient Servant,

*William Smith.*

TO  
MY WORTHY FRIENDS  
AND  
School-Fellows

Dr. Charles Pinckney, Genl.  
Roger Williams, Esq.  
William Tilton, Genl.  
Thomas Hurley, Genl.  
James Brice, Genl.  
Samuel Norris, Genl.  
Mr. Humphrey, Esq.  
Mr. Robert Fowler

STEWARDS  
OF ST. PAUL'S School-Fellow

Gentlemen,

THIS SERMON

(Published at Your Desire)

Is most Humbly Dedicated by

Your very Affectionate

and Obedient Servant

William Smith

No 7

PROVERBS IV. 13.

*Take fast hold of Instruction; let Her not go; keep Her, for She is thy Life.*

**U**NDER the Name of *Wisdom*, Solomon in many places of this *Book of Proverbs* recommends *Religion* to us; under that of *Instruction*, an acquaintance with the Rules of Religion, and that Faith, and Practice which are the Essentials of it.

The Text is a part of those *Instructions*, which his Father *David* gave him; He gives them with as great an Authority to us, and would have us be conversant in the Precepts of that Holy Religion reveal'd by God to Ignorant Mankind; He would have us *Hold fast* all *Instructions* imparted to us of that Nature, not to be remiss in our Inquiries into Divine Truth, but to keep and improve what we know already, for by doing so, we may obtain Eternal Life.

But, if the Improvement of our Natural Parts, if the Exercise and Enlargement of our Intellectuals, be a great Help to us in our Inquiries into Religious Truth, if there be ways and means ap-  
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pointed by our Allwise Creator to facilitate our Industrious Re-searches, we ought to look out diligently for them, and to use them to the Purposes for which they were originally intended.

Among the Means design'd for so excellent an End, there is none more valuable than *Good Learning*, and an *Ingenuous Education*. A Man without Letters, may be an admirably Devout and Practical Christian; he may embrace the true Catholick Faith, he may discourse with a great deal of honest Sense and Fervor upon the common Duties of Religion; but a Man of solid Humane Learning, who, by Instruction from others, and by his own Studies, has put a sharper Edge upon his Natural Endowments, may make his Abilities highly beneficial to all about him; he may explain the obscurest parts of God's sacred Oracles, he may satisfy the Doubts and Scruples of the Weak, he may distinguish more exactly between Writings of a really Divine Authority, and the Frauds, the Impostures and Interpolations of Busy and Presuming Hereticks; he may clear good Authors, and defend strenuously and effectually the great Truths of God against all the Sophistry and Confidence of malicious, subtle and perverted Men; he may be fit to govern and instruct the Church, he may untie the hardest Knots of the Law, he may be able

able to serve his Prince and to assist the State, and the more he has of the unletter'd Man's Honesty and Integrity, the more good will he be able to do, and the greater Influence will both his Reasons and his Practice have upon the Lives of others.

This Learning is so necessary to carry on the publick good of Mankind, that the Schools of the Prophets, so call'd, under the Mosaick Oeconomy, were, I presume, design'd to fit young men for those Employments, Sacred or Civil, which they might regularly be call'd to: And when our Blessed Master intended the Salvation of Mankind by the Preaching of the Gospel, tho' his Disciples were unlearn'd before, yet he would not send them out to make Disciples of all Nations, till the Holy Ghost had given them Learning sufficient for that weighty Employment. And St. Paul had been brought up at the Feet of the Learned Gamaliel before his admission into the Apostolical College. They who have no Learning may decry it, and for want of it may wrest the Oracles of God to their own Destruction; they who have Learning will love it, they who love it, 'tis suppos'd, will use it well, they'll consecrate it to the Service of God; the more they have gotten of it the more they'll thirst after it; the more they know of good, the better they'll be; the empty Arguments of Atheists will

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never prevail upon them to corrupt it, nor shall the senseless Exclamations of giddy-headed *Enthusiasts* ever persuade them to cast it away: Men indeed half-witted and half-learned may be fit Tools in the Devil's Hands to affront God, to pervert Men, and to sow the Seeds of Scepticism, Debauchery and Infidelity; but Men of Penetration, who have tasted the Sweets of Learning, the good effects of *Instruction*, when they have got such *Instruction*, they'll hold it fast, they'll not let it go, they'll keep it, for without it their very Being is scarce worthy of the name of *Life*.

Those then who seek for *Instruction* in Humane Learning, that they may make use of it as a guide to Heaven, and assisting in matters of an inferior concern, ought to understand the Wise Man's words as directed to themselves; and consequently,

1<sup>st</sup>. To take fast hold of *Instruction* in all good Learning and Knowledge.

2<sup>dly</sup>. Not to let it go; but

3<sup>dly</sup>. To keep it—— And all for that Reason laid down in the Text; viz.——Because, *Instruction is their Life*, or the most valuable thing in it.——

This Reason gives not only a Noble, but a just Character of *Instruction*, 'tis a Proposition of it self, viz.—— That good *Instruction*, or a Learned and Religious

*Religious Education is the Life of the Rational Man*---  
We'll clear that Proposition first, and then the Reasonableness of that threefold Command, to take fast hold of Instruction, not to let it go, but to keep it, will be obvious and indisputable.

The Proposition then is— *That good Instruction, or a Religious and Learned Education is the Life of the Rational Man.*— I put Religion and Learning together, because no Learning can well be solid where Religion is not at the bottom; no Religion can be supported without Learning, since the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost are ceas'd. Where Illiterate Men and Blind Guides take upon 'em to be Instructors of others in Divine Matters, their Labours generally produce little else but Giddiness, Ignorance and Enthusiasm; where Men of Polite Learning without Religion undertake the work, their Hearers very often prove Hereticks or Unbelievers. Religion and Learning are both such things as we are by Nature unacquainted with, they are such Accomplishments as without which, jointly or separately, none can pretend to true Happiness; they therefore who are ready and able to give Instructions to the Ignorant in these matters faithfully, are great Blessings to the Age and Place they live in; and they who are partakers of their Labours, enjoy the greatest Blessings they can hope for in this World.

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The Soul is a Spiritual Being, having a distinct Subsistence of its own; and when join'd to a Body rightly organiz'd, and adapted to its use, acts agreeably to the nicer, more refin'd, or less perfect Constitution of that Body: The union of such a Spiritual to such a Material Being makes a Living Creature of a particular Species, and differing essentially from all other Creatures whatsoever. As the Soul is a Rational Being, when it's united to such a Body as before-mentioned, they make a *Man* together; and the Soul being Rational, the *Man* compounded of such a Body and such a Soul, is call'd a *Rational Creature*; i. e. He's a Creature capable of understanding, discoursing and arguing. The Rational Soul, being of a Spiritual Nature, and originated from Heaven, cannot subsist without Action, cannot act without having some Impressions upon it of a Divine and Sacred Nature; which make it covetous of Knowledge, longing for opportunities to gain it, and capable of enjoying it self in its own Contemplations: But it can make nothing of its Active Nature visible to others, till the Body, by Time and Age grows to a Capacity of being sensible of the Exertions of the Soul. The first Notices of the Soul's Rationality are weak, and it might almost be disputed, whether the Motions observable in the  
growing

growing Child, spring from the Mechanism of the Body, or the Faculties of the Soul; for, whatever Chimæras some may amuse themselves and the World with, as to what sort of *Man* a Child would prove, who should be dropp'd in a Forest, and never converse with any Rational Being; all Arguments drawn from thence one way or other, can have no use, and consequently deserve no Answer; for, the very Supposition is at least an Improbability; there hardly ever was any such Man who liv'd without Humane Conversation altogether; or were it likely, how capable soever the Man might be of Reasoning or Arguing, he never could reason or argue at all, but only in his own Thoughts, because it would be impossible for him to know any thing of Language; and if he had none, how could he make his Sense or Reason appear by Signs, Writing, or any other Artifice, since they are chiefly attainable by Humane Conversation and Instruction?

'Tis *Instruction* then that awakes the Soul, and renews the Divine Ideas stamp'd upon it; 'tis *Instruction* that makes the Soul apprehensive of its Powers, of its Wants; the Soul every day finds it self more agile and active, as the Body grows every day more perfect, and fit to answer its Tendencies. The untaught Novice admires the curi-

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ous Art, and admirable Contrivance of a Mechanick Hand and Head: The Improving Youth, tho' he can speak and make himself understood, yet he gazes with *wonder* on the Man of *Parts* and *Learning*, when he discourses on Subjects lofty and above his reach, and with *pleasure* when he discourses on those more ordinary and level to his Capacity; such Conversation makes the Soul eager of that Learning which it observes in others, and finds it self capable of; and, till the Body arrives at a greater maturity, by which the Soul may more freely exert its Powers; the Man, tho' he is capable of Reasoning he is no Reasoner; he acts but only as a nicer piece of Mechanism, or at best he only leads a sort of Brutal Life, and may almost *be compar'd to the Beasts that perish*.

Had the state of Innocence continued, the Soul in that happy Condition would have been capable of every thing of it self, as we see *Adam*, without a Master, understood the Nature of every living Creature, and gave it a Name suitable to that Nature. But, when Sin enter'd into the World, Darkness surrounded the Soul, the Plague of Sin miserably tainted and corrupted it, Ignorance grew upon it, and all the Studies that wise men engag'd themselves in, could not enable them to retrieve the Perfection and Wisdom of the  
first

first Man, or to find out by themselves the real nature of any thing at all, so as to put it beyond dispute ; as is plain from the endless Contentions among the various Sects of Philosophers upon all the *Phænomena* in Nature.

Had *Adam* stood in his first Estate, his Children would have needed no Instruction, Knowledge and Virtue would have been at once inspir'd into the Soul ; when he was fallen, if he had not instructed his Corrupt Posterity, all Notions of good would in a Generation or two, have been in danger of being lost ; and after the loss of Original Innocence, Men were not capable of doing any thing which might become their Character of Reasonable Creatures, whose Souls were Particles of the Divine Nature, and Candidates of Immortality ; had not their Parents Educated 'em in all necessary Knowledge, and the Spirit of God open'd and fitted their Souls for Discipline. To these Considerations, they ow'd all those Inventions that were necessary for carrying on the Work of Husbandry, since the Earth was like to leave Men unsupplied, unless it were cultivated by Pains and Labour. To these they ow'd the Invention of such things as might serve to compose the drooping Spirits, to raise up the Dejected, and comfort the Afflicted, by singing Praises to the God of all

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things, and by joining Musical Instruments, as the Harp and Organ, to raise their Joy, advance their Harmony, and to celebrate the Glories of *him* who had bestow'd such useful Wisdom upon those, who, by the Folly of their Predecessors, had been near depriv'd of all their Intellectual Ornaments. To these they ow'd their skill of working in Iron and Brass, and improving those untractable Mettals for Humane Use and Convenience. It was not Nature alone, but God's Blessing upon Men's industrious Inquiries, which furnish'd Men with these Abilities.

Upon the renewal of the World after the Flood, it was the same care of the Instruction of their Children that preserv'd the same Blessings to them of *Religion and Learning*. And we find *Abraham* has a noble Character from God himself on the account of his care for the *Education of his Family*. And, if we give any Credit to the *Jewish Traditions*, *Abraham* was a Master of all good Learning; and it was from *Him* that the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians* deriv'd all that which they were in after-Ages celebrated for: When God brought the House of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and gave them a Law, he commanded that the *Priests* should teach it to the People, the *Parents* to their *Children*, and that they should take care to imprint it thoroughly on their Minds; for,

for, their knowledge of those things would commend their *Wisdom and Understanding* to all the *Neighbouring Nations*, Deut. 4. 6, 9.

On these Considerations the *Schools of the Prophets* were afterwards set up in *Israel*, and all *Nations* agreed in appointing *Masters and Teachers*, that they might take care of the *Education and Instruction* of their *Youth*; they were sensible how deep the Impressions of the first *Notions* stamp'd upon their tender *Minds* would be; and therefore those who were given up to *Idolatri*, to any unlawful *Arts*, or *Studies*, or who had no right *Notions* of the *Supreme Being*, took care that those who taught their *Children* should principle them in the same *Tenets* which they themselves so obstinately held: Which kind of *Education* not being good, because *sound Religion*, and *sound Learning* did not meet together, they prov'd successively *Idolaters* or *Atheists*, while those who had really good *Education*, *i. e.* who were instructed in all *Polite Humane Literature* were taught to *fear God*, and to *keep his Commandments* at the same time, and so became useful both ways to all their *Neighbours*, being able to defend those *Truths* they profess'd against all the *Insults* of *Learned and Philosophical Atheists*, and to baffle all their *Pretences* to more than ordinary *Sagacity and Wisdom*.

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The *Heathen Nations* had that Honour for that advantageous Employment of instructing Youth, that they did not look upon it as an Undertaking fit for Men of mean Parts and Learning, but they chose those of the greatest Reputation for their Scholastick Abilities; and the most Illustrious Princes in the World shew'd them Reverence, agreeable to the Difficulty and Importance of the work they were engag'd in. Hence *Philip of Macedon* thought it one great Blessing that his Son *Alexander* was born at a time when he might be brought up under the Discipline of the Learned *Aristotle*, and *Alexander* himself thought he ow'd more to *Aristotle* for his Education, than he did to his Father *Philip* for his Royal Blood.

When *Christianity* took place of *Judaism* and *Gentilism*, the excellency of early Instruction in Religion and knowledge was own'd by all; *St. Paul* therefore who had that Blessing, was call'd to be an *Apostle*, and inferior to none; and tho' the Operations of the Holy Spirit were very large and frequent in those early Ages, and in many superseded the necessity of a learned Education, yet *St. Paul* takes notice of *Timothy's* being brought up in the knowledge of the Scriptures from a Child, and esteems it a great happiness; and yet after he had ordain'd him to the *Episcopal Office*, he lays this

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Command upon him—— *Till I come*, says he, give attention to *Reading*, to *Exhortation*, to *Doctrine*; neglect not the *Gift* that is in thee, which was given thee by *Prophecy*, and by laying on of the *Hands* of the *Presbytery*; meditate on these things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy *profiting* may appear to all Men, 1 Tim. 4. 13, 14. What was recommended to him, was in him likewise to all others; and good Learning was thought in those days to consist, not only in Reading and Studying the Sacred Books, but in turning over the Works of the Learned Heathens, out of whom St. Paul himself has quoted several Passages; and the Christians afterwards, thought Humane Learning so necessary an Accomplishment, that rather than want it, they would send their Sons even to the Heathen Schools; and it was look'd upon as the most fatal piece of Policy of that crafty Apostate Julian, that he forbad the Instruction of Christian Children, and commanded the *Sophists* and *Rhetoricians* of that Age to shut up their Schools against 'em, agreeably to the late Practice of the *Modern Persecutor* in a neighbouring Kingdom; and never was any wicked device more likely to have ruin'd Christianity than *that*, had he liv'd to prosecute it. But thanks be to God, the Christian's Vigilancy to defeat such Hellish Enterprizes, was so indefatigable,

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gable, and their Learning so eminent, that we had our *Apollinarius* to answer the Heathens *Homer*, our *Nazianzen* to match their *Euripides*, our *Chrysostom* against their *Demosthenes*, our *Basil* against their *Isocrates*, our *Athanasius* against their *Plato*, and our *Origen* against their *Aristotle*: Those of Ours, were great Ornaments of God's Church, and eminent both for their extraordinary Learning and exemplary Piety: And all, both on one and the other side, were remarkably famous, but, were held under Discipline first, and receiv'd Instruction from proper Masters, tho' in different Times.

A greater Man than any of those now mention'd acquaints us—— *That the Soul should be without knowledge is not good*—— Prov. 19. 2. And the Son of *Syrach* advises us, *Not to be ignorant of any thing, in a great matter or a small*, Ecclus. 5. 15. Such universal knowledge claims the next place to that of *Solomon*, and would equalize us to *Adam* himself; but in our Corrupted State 'tis like perfect Righteousness, never to be attained in this Life, but always to be aspir'd after: And he who presses continually towards these things, will make a very happy progress in 'em, and be accepted by God, for the sake of that *Blessed Jesus*, who does not intercede for the Slothful, but the Industrious, Active and Conquering Christian. Now, as the Body being

being *Matter* requires a *Material Nourishment*, without which it would soon fail, so the *Soul* being of a *Spiritual Nature*, requires Food suitable to its self, and that is *Learning* and *Knowledge*: The Man who is altogether without *Instruction*, is wholly under the Government of Appetite; the Man who is well *instructed* in all those things *Spiritual* and *Temporal*, in which his present or future Happiness is concern'd, *that Man* lives the truly Rational Life; the Soul without it has some resemblance to that subtle Matter which often gathers in the upper Region; Learning like Motion kindles it into a bright and starry Flame: The Soul can't be said to enjoy it self, nor the Man to live without it; and indeed, if the Soul in its future state should not recover its original Powers which it would have enjoy'd in the state of Innocence, nay, if it did not attain to greater Perfections, as it will then actuate a Body more pure, more refin'd, than that of the first Man was, so, as to *see and know as it self is seen and known*, Heaven it self would scarce be a place of compleat Joy and Pleasure. If the Soul does not, either by ordinary Conversation, or by particular Instructions recover something of those Powers lost, or clouded by the prevalency of Sin, nothing would be more intolerable than the present Life, and nothing more

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more desperate and hopeless than suffering Mankind.

How happy then are *We* who are here met together, in having suck'd in the Milk both of Learning and Religion at the same time and place! who have sat at the Feet of such *Gamaliel's*, as were not only *Masters* of all Humane Learning, but were capacitated to instruct us in the Principles of that Religion, begun and settled in the World, by the Holy Jesus and his Apostles. Our Acquisitions may be various, as Mens Parts are differing, but nothing but our Supineness and Negligence, or the want of God's Blessing upon our particular Studies, tho' under the most valuable Instructors in the Nation, can leave us ignorant of any thing that's indispensibly necessary for our good. How much are *We* oblig'd to bless God for that wonderful Provision he has made for us, and many Thousands in this Nation, by the Generous and Pious Inclinations of the *Worthy, Noble and Royal Founders* of our *Schools and Universities*, whither all are invited to *bow their Necks to the Yoke of Discipline*, and to fit themselves to be the Supporters and Ornaments of the *English Establish'd Church*, and the *British State*! How are *We* oblig'd, according to that Progress any of us have made in Humane and Divine Knowledge, to employ our whole

whole Ability in maintaining and defending our present Government, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and that *Holy Religion* which has so long liv'd and flourish'd under the Protection of them both, and I pray God it may ever do so, against all Opposers whatsoever! How are *We* bound to implore God's continued Blessing upon *Ours*, and all other *lawful Schools* of good Learning and ingenuous Education; that he would furnish them with such able, prudent, faithful, sedulous, and truly pious Instructors, that neither *Ignorance* nor *Atheism*, neither *Schism* nor *Herésie*, may overwhelm us or our Posterity! *Solomon* tells us, that *the Tongue of the Wise useth Knowledge aright, but the Mouth of Fools poureth out Foolishness*—— Prov. 15. 2. We see the last part of his words every day made good, and in too too many Companies; it is our Business to discountenance such daring Libertines, by exerting our Natural or Improv'd Parts to the utmost, and to convince them, that the Belief and Worship of a Deity is most agreeable to the Genius of Mankind, that Wickedness is the greatest Folly, and Goodness and Virtue the truest Wisdom. And how are *We* oblig'd to implore the Blessing of God upon our present *Nursing Mother*, our most Gracious Queen, that *He, who has the Hearts of all Princes in his Hands*, would continue her zealous, happy and

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successful in the Defence and Protection of *that Religion*, of which She is so eminently an Ornament, and *that Learning* of which She is so illustrious a Patroness! And if we have that real esteem for our present Happiness which we all pretend to, then let us demonstrate it by following the wise man's Advice with all Chearfulness and Diligence, *viz. never to be given to Change*; but shew by our constant Endeavours to preserve *Her Majesty's Government*, that we have *laid fast hold on good Instruction*, that we are convinc'd it is our *Life*, and that we will never *let it go*, but *keep it*. —But farther, to pursue the Doctrine of my Text.

1<sup>st</sup>. *Let us lay hold on Instruction*; Let us catch at it with all imaginable eagerness, let us lay *fast hold* upon it where-ever we have an opportunity to do so. We are ready to pity the Ignorance of the poor *Indians*, because they are destitute of Instruction; we pity those among our selves who can neither read nor write; but what do *they* deserve who have *Manna* every day falling round their Tents and will not gather it? if they have Instructors every where ready to inform them in every thing that can render them acceptable to God and Man, and yet love Darkness and Ignorance, or abuse that little Light which they pretend to?

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We have the lawful *Ambassadors of Heaven* shewing us our present miserable State, and *intreating us, that we would be reconciled to God*; and yet, how many Thousands in this populous City spend Weeks, and Months, and Years without ever entering into any place of publick worship, or where Christ is really or pretendedly Preach'd? How many are there of those, who go to such places, and have no other End in't, but to despise the Truth, to ridicule the Preacher, to cavil at Religion, and to affront its Glorious and Ever-blessed Author? Hence *Atheism* has its *Profelytes* and *Abettors*, Vile Books and Impious Pamphlets are daily publish'd, industriously spread, and greedily receiv'd; and Ignorance of the Principles of sound Religion so wretchedly prevails, that even *Philadelphians*, *Quakers*, the pretended *New Prophets*, and pretended *Affertors*, but real *Betrayers of the Rights of the Christian Church*, can glory in the multitudes of their Followers.

What do we deserve, if Schools are every where open'd for the Instruction of our Youth in the first Rudiments of Learning, if the *Schools of the Prophets*, our unparallell'd Universities, nobly Endow'd and well govern'd for the good and encouragement of such as love Learning, if these places every way open their Arms wide to embrace those

who desire the Improvement of their Minds; and yet we leave our Posterity to be brought up in Ignorance, and so to become the Prey of every Emisary of Darkness? If we don't *lay hold of Instructions* while we may have 'em, an Atheistical Generation may possibly spring up, who may look upon Schools endow'd as *Ours*, upon Universities, upon Churches, to be as superfluous and needless, as Religious Houses were thought in the days of *Henry the Eighth*, and the Endowments of all of 'em may meet with the same Fate.

2dly. *Instruction*, when we have taken hold of it, is not to be let go. It is a Jewel of a very great price, they who get it once, if they well consider'd its worth, would part with all the Riches and Glories of this World before they would let go so valuable a Blessing: He who grows slack and remiss in his Inquiries into Divine Truth, who seem'd once to catch at it with extraordinary eagerness, too often becomes cold in his pursuit of it, and falls into the *Laodicean Humour*, till all his Religion is nothing but noise, nothing but shew.

Sometimes indeed such an unhappy Creature comes to open his Eyes, and see his Folly; but, 'tis generally as the *Rich Man* in the Parable, only when too late. *Solomon* brings in a poor lewd Wretch when he has ruin'd himself by his own Fol-

ly, breaking out into those bitter, but pathetic Lamentations— *How have I hated Instruction, and my Heart despised Reproof, and have not obey'd the voice of my Teachers, nor inclin'd mine Ear to them that instructed me?*— Prov. 5. 12, 13. How often do we hear some advanc'd in Years, reflecting on the unkindness of their Parents and Guardians who took no better care of their Education? How often do we hear others condemn themselves, and their own Stupidity, who had so many opportunities of Instruction, and yet never took any notice of 'em? How many are there who have been once considerable Proficients in good Learning, who yet giving themselves up to a negligent and supine Life, have nothing to boast of in the Conclusion, but how much Learning they have lost? So, many Fools have a Prize put into their Hands, but have not Hearts to make use of it.

3dly. Those who have taken hold of Instruction, must keep it; they must not entertain the wild and senseless Notions of some Modern Enthusiasts, who decry all Humane Learning, that they may get the better opportunities to vent their absurd and impious Imaginations, and seduce others more Ignorant than themselves. Tho' the Devil often abuses Wit and Learning to the carrying on his own destructive Designs, yet he knows they are fatal to him.

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him in a good Hand, and he had rather an Universal Ignorance should eclipse the World, than wait for such Advantages as he may get by Learning misus'd. Those who keep Learning and Instruction, must not take the unprofitable Servant's course, and wrap their Talent in a Napkin, but they must be like the faithful and diligent Servants, who gave a good account of the Improvement of their Talents to their Lord: they must make all such as they meet with sitting in Darkness and the Shadow of Death, partakers of that Light imparted to them; This is the way to imprint it the more firmly in their own Minds. In all kinds of Learning, not to advance is to lose ground: Hence, the Apostle reproves the *Hebrews*, because, when according to the Measure of those Instructions they receiv'd, they should have been Masters, they were yet but meer Children and Learners; and St. Paul advises all Believers to—— grow in Grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—— And what value the sensible World sets upon those who don't improve under sufficient Instructors, I suppose every one knows, and You, I am sure, are not to be taught.

If we then would follow Solomon's Rule, let us proceed daily as far as by God's Assistance we can, both in Divine and Humane Learning;  
what

what we have got, let us not *let go*; what we want, let us take *hold of*; let us not be content with the Life of *Brutes*; but endeavour to live like *Men*, like reasonable, prudent, thoughtful Creatures; let us also endeavour by our visible progress in *Understanding and Wisdom*, and in all the Instances of *Charity and Brotherly-kindness* to each other, to do Honour to the Pious Memory of the *Reverend Founder* of that School where we receiv'd our happy Education. Let us do Honour to our *Teachers*, those whose Care first brought us out of our Native Ignorance, and imbued our Souls with the knowledge of God and our Selves; that it may appear that their *Labours with us have not been in vain*. May God by his Strength assist the *present Masters* of our School, may he increase the Numbers of those who are initiated into Learning there; may all who come from thence be useful Members both of *Church and State*; and may they all in their several Vocations and Employments promote the Glory of God and the Temporal and Eternal Good of one another.

*Which God of his Infinite Goodness and Mercy grant  
for Jesus Christ his sake, &c. Amen.*

F I N I S.

we have got let us not let go; what we  
let us take hold of; let us not be content  
with the life of this world; but let us be content  
with the life of the world to come; let us also endeavor to be  
in the Kingdom of God and in all the  
of Christ and his Kingdom; let us do  
to do honor to the Lord Jesus Christ of the  
and founder of that School where we received  
happy Education; let us be true to our  
whole hearted devotion to the Lord  
and his Kingdom; let us be true to the  
knowledge of God and his Kingdom; let us  
appear that their Labors have not been  
in vain; May God by his Spirit fill the  
Members of our School; may he increase the  
number of those who are interested in Learning  
and may all who come from thence be useful  
in the Kingdom of Christ and his Kingdom; and may they  
in their several Vocations and Employments  
bring the Glory of God and the Temporal and  
eternal Good of one another.



What God of his Spirit fill the  
for Jesus Christ his sake. Amen.

F I N I S

